

# **SR 167 High Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lanes Pilot Project**

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**Transportation Commission**  
**May 22, 2008**



**Washington State**  
**Department of Transportation**

# HOT Lanes Now Open

Opened at 10:30 a.m. on  
Saturday, May 3

- Nearly three weeks of operations and we are already learning from this pilot project and collecting valuable data.
- We are watching the system and the new technology closely while adjusting to find the 'sweet spot' where we can get the most efficient operations.
- We are closely watching how drivers use the access points and will continue to monitor traffic flow and any delays.
- We are changing operations when appropriate—the first weekend, we pulled back the access striping on northbound SR 167 at I-405 by 600 feet to give drivers more room to merge—this length is the equivalent of two football fields.
- Tracking and responding to public comments via several mediums.



# Successful Opening

## Partnering with Washington State Patrol

- Top notch enforcement—enforcing the laws and educating drivers.
- Heavy media blitz—strategic messaging, ride-alongs, interviews, media and project team accessibility.
- Emergency and project operations support.
- Roadway operations and conditions reporting.

## WSDOT incident response teams (IRT)

- Providing additional support for SR 167 and HOT lanes.
- Clearing the road—helping drivers.



# Successful Opening

## Partnering with media

- We were the 'it' topic for the past week and into the opening.
- We provided around-the-clock and on-the-spot accessibility.

## We continue to make headlines

- Heavy television coverage on KING 5, Q 13, KOMO, KIRO and Metro traffic.
- Heavy radio coverage including KIRO, KOMO, KUOW, local NPR and Metro traffic.
- Local and national print and online coverage with Seattle Times, Seattle PI, News Tribune, Renton Reporter, Columbian, Herald, youtube, local editorials, columns, Web logs, national Web news sites, and others.



# HOT Lanes Now Open

First week by the numbers - May 3-7

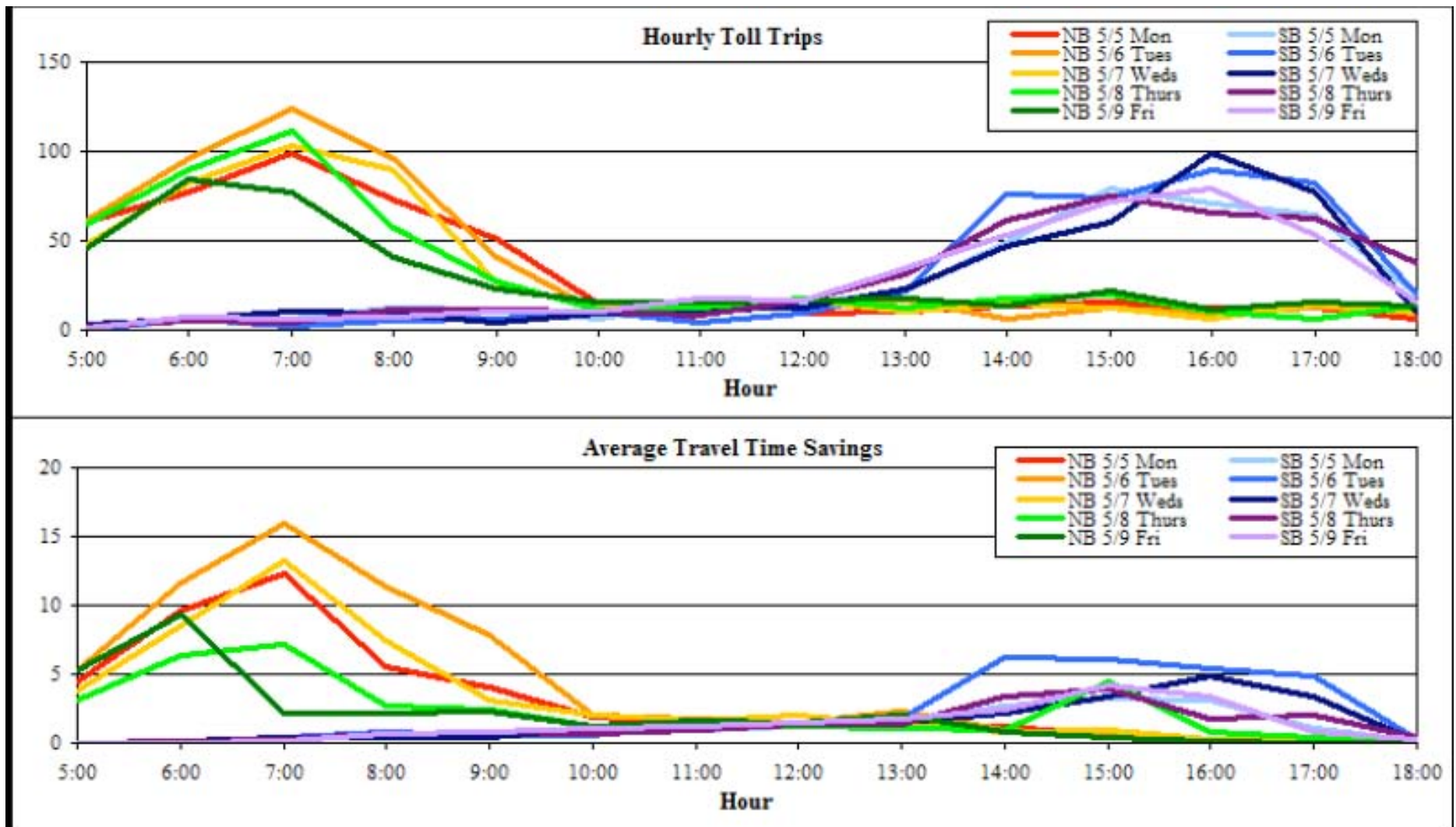
	<u>northbound</u>	<u>southbound</u>
Peak hour average toll	\$1.20	\$1.10
Peak hour corridor time-savings	10 minutes	4 minutes
Peak hour average toll volume	100 vehicles	80 vehicles
Peak hour <i>Good To Go!</i> %	12%	9%
Average daily volume	460 vehicles	390 vehicles
Maximum toll paid	\$2.75	\$2.25

***Drivers paid an average of \$1.20 to save 10 minutes of travel-time on northbound SR 167 during the peak morning commute.***

- Drivers purchased 1104 *Good To Go!* transponder shields.
- Drivers opened up 378 new *Good To Go!* accounts (and purchased 1000 transponders to go with these accounts).
- Customer service received 291 calls for SR 167—this is 21% of the 1385 calls made to customer service about *Good To Go!* accounts.
- WSP issued tickets to 57 drivers who were illegally using the HOV-lane as a solo driver.
- Total *Good To Go!* users for the week: 4736.



# First Week – Trips and Travel Time Savings



# How Are We Doing?

- One week into operations of a four-year pilot project.
- Complicated algorithms must be adjusted to find the “sweet spot”.
- We’ll learn from each experience and make the system better.
- Monitor if confusion continues about crossing double white lines and when drivers need to start moving over to make their exit.
- Important to remember this is a pilot project, designed to gain information and improve as we go.



# What Are People Saying?

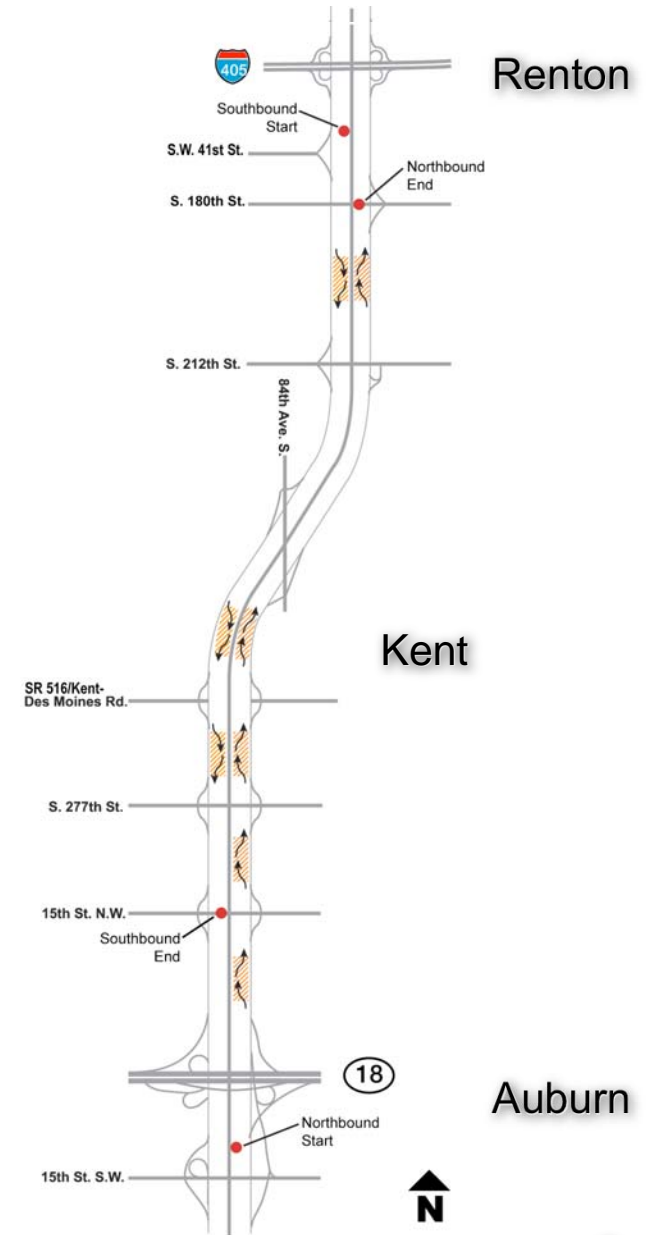
Our inboxes are full...

- Questions and concerns about the double-striping and access points.
- Questions on how to get a transponder.
- Concerns about having to buy a shield to block the transponder as a carpooler.
- Concerns about tolled lanes just being a way to double-tax.
- Concerns that toll lanes are for the rich.



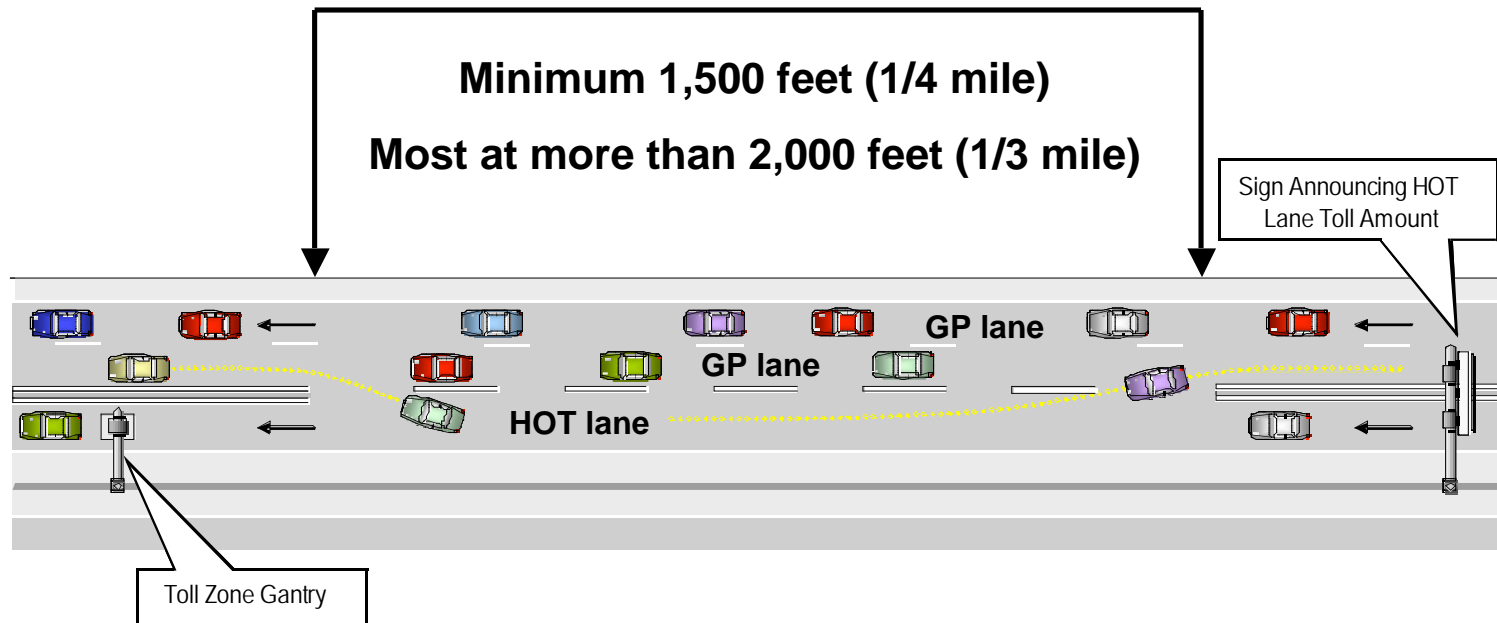
# HOT Lanes Key Features

- Free flow operations goal for HOT lanes: at least 45 mph - 90% of the time during peak period.
- More than eight miles of HOT lanes southbound and 12 miles northbound.
- 10 access points.
- HOV 2+ and motorcycles toll-free.
- Operating during the day (typically tolled between 5 am and 7 pm), open to all traffic at night.
- Variable tolls between 50¢ and \$9.00.
- Revenue will be used to pay for toll and roadway operations and maintenance, increased enforcement, and added incident response.



# Access Points

Defined locations for entering and exiting the HOT Lane.

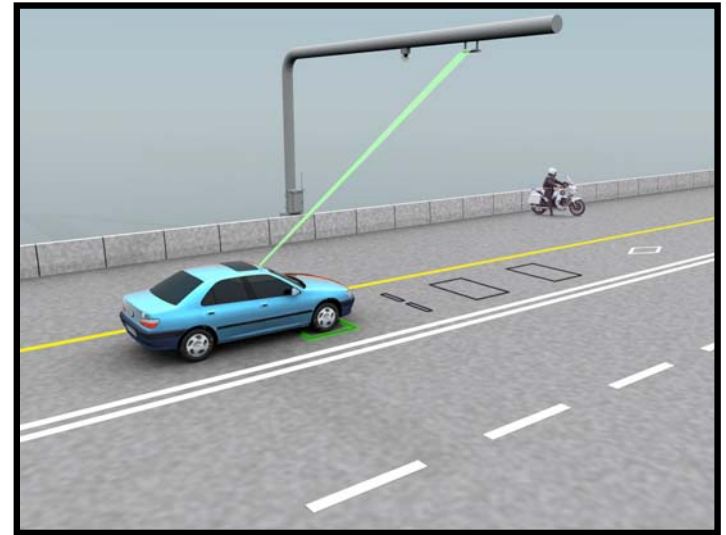


HOT lanes tolls collected by electronic system only.

- No toll booths.
- Same tolling transponder and Customer Service Center as the Tacoma Narrows Bridge.

# HOT Lane Enforcement

- Consistent enforcement is key to building public trust and a sense of fairness.
- WSDOT is working with the Washington State Patrol to enforce the new rules of the road.
- Traffic citations are being issued for the following violations:
  - Illegal use of HOT lane by single-occupancy vehicle
  - Attempt to avoid paying required toll
  - Crossing double white lines
  - **Three possible citations, each citation is \$124**
- Drivers can use the HERO system to report violators.



*Simulation of WSP monitoring HOT lanes*



*Hand-held Enforcement Reader*

# Summary of Public Outreach Activities

## Design and construction

- Public open houses held in 2005 and 2006.
- 6 focus groups – general public, low-income, small business.
- SR 167 driver project survey.
- Presenting project information to local commute trip reduction program meetings.
- Local elected officials outreach.
- Ongoing responses to citizen correspondence.

## Opening

- Driver education campaign to inform drivers about the new rules of the road for HOT lanes.
- *Good To Go!* mobile customer service centers at locations along SR 167.
- Ongoing responses to citizen correspondence.



# Where Do the Tolls Go?

	<b>May 2008 thru June 2009</b>
<b>Projected Toll Revenues</b>	\$ 1,150,200
<b>Budgeted Expenses</b>	
Toll Oversight & Management	\$ 308,616
Toll Operations Contract	\$ 911,370
Incident Response, Traffic, Maintenance	\$ 656,417
Washington State Patrol - Enforcement	\$ 376,597
<b>Total Budgeted Expenses</b>	\$ 2,253,000

# How Will the Project Be Assessed?

WSDOT will report to the Legislature and the Transportation Commission annually, on such items as:

- Freeway efficiency and safety.
- Effectiveness for transit.
- Person and vehicle movements by mode.
- Ability to finance improvements and transportation services through tolls.
- The affects on all highway users. The department will analyze aggregate use data and conduct, as needed, surveys to assess usage of the facility with geographic, socioeconomic, and demographic information.

# What's Needed?

## Direct HOV to HOV connection

Connecting HOV lanes on I-405 to SR 167 will help alleviate congestion and improve traffic flow and safety by decreasing weaving at one of the state's most congested interchanges.

We are looking into funding options to improve this interchange. On November 6, 2007 voters rejected Proposition 1, the Roads and Transit investment package, which would have provided funding for this project.



*Graphic rendition of what a direct HOV to HOV connection could look like at the SR 167 and I-405 interchange*

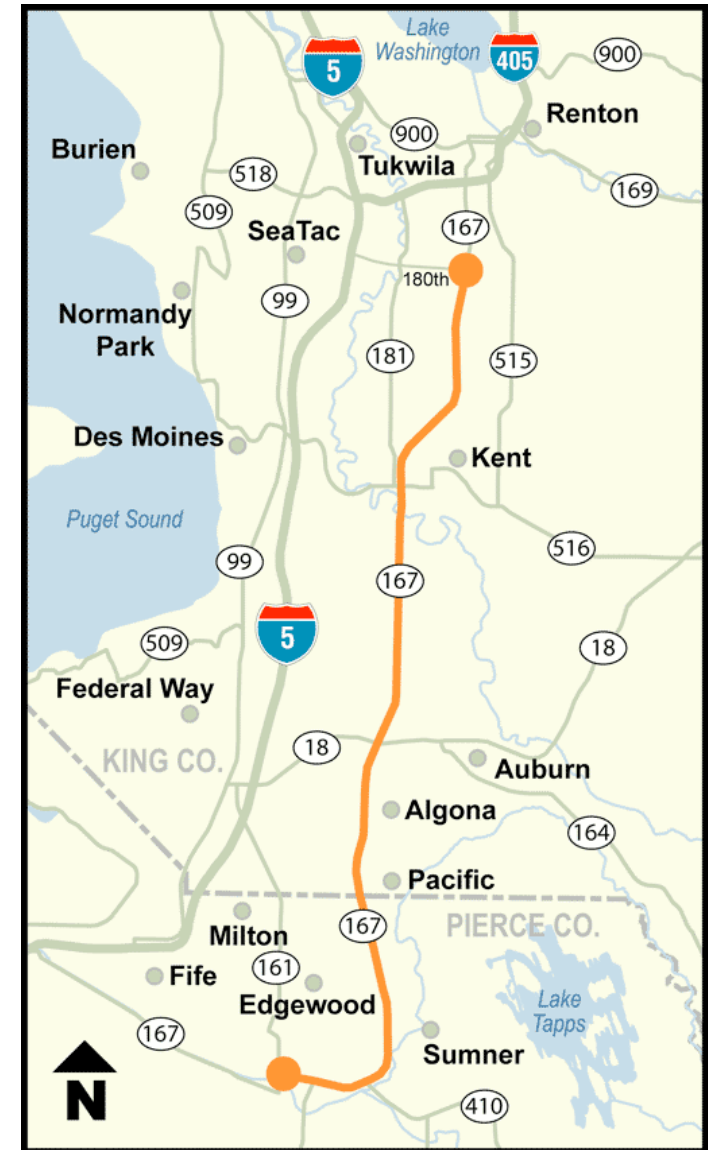
# Additional SR 167 Work Needed

## Widening SR 167 to the south

- Completing SR 167 highway widening from Auburn to Puyallup.
  - Widening SR 167 to add one southbound lane from 277<sup>th</sup> St. to 8<sup>th</sup> St. E in Pierce County.

## Improving traffic flow where I-405 and SR 167 meet

- Widening I-405 to add one lane in each direction between I-5 and SR 169.
- Widening the highway to add one southbound lane on SR 167 between I-405 and SW 41<sup>st</sup>.



For more information on the HOT Lanes project,  
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Or visit the project web page:  
[www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/SR167/HOTLanes/](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/SR167/HOTLanes/)